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\* WILLIAM WYON AND THE PENNY BLACK \*  
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Prepared by

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For a Presentation at the February 6, 1990 Meeting of the

Western Pennsylvania Numismatic Society

Pittsburgh, PA



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this presentation is to --

- o Provide an account of the contributions of William Wyon to numismatics and philately;
- o Show the influence of his relatives on his profession and his influence on his relatives; and in particular,
- o Define his exact contribution, as a renown medalist, to the issuance of the World's first adhesive stamp used in uniform postage within a country.

Some "zeroxed" copies of his works have been included in the Appendix to help remind you of some of the great contributions which attest to his being a first class artist.



## THE WYON FAMILY

From before the middle of the eighteenth century to almost the end of the nineteenth century the many members of the Wyon family served in England as designers, die-engravers and medalists. Although their greatest impact has been on the numismatics of the British Commonwealth, they also influenced philately and the postal system.

The Wyon family of English designers, medalists and engravers descended from Peter George Wyon (I), who was born in Cologne, Germany. He married Maria Sibylla Hemmerden on January 1, 1705.

His third son, Peter George Wyon (II) moved to England. He was seventeen years of age when George the Second became King. His son, George (III) served as an apprentice to George II's goldsmith, Hemmings, before joining the Soho Mint of Birmingham as a medalist in 1775. Two of George (III) Wyon's sons -- Thomas and Peter -- worked in Birmingham as medalists and engravers in the preparation of token coinage. Peter was the father of William Wyon, the most famous member of the Wyon family. William's artistic ability contributed to the later coinage of King George the Fourth and the earlier coinage of Queen Victoria.

Thomas (I), Benjamin, Joseph Shepherd, Alfred Benjamin, and Allan Wyon all served as Chief Engraver of His or Her Majesty's Seals. Thomas (II) and William Wyon held the position of Chief Engraver of the Royal Mint. Upon the death of William, the position of Chief Engraver became extinct. Both Leonard Charles and James (II) Wyon worked at the Royal Mint as engravers. In 1843 when Leonard was sixteen years of age, he engraved a medal depicting King Louis the Eighteenth of France on one side and on the other side a copy of the obverse of the crown of Oliver Cromwell. In 1851 he succeeded his father as the major engraver at the Royal Mint. Leonard Charles Wyon designed many obverses on British coins and patterns. He executed most of the dies for the British military and naval medals issued between 1851 and 1891. The last medalist member of the Wyon family was Allan Gairdner Wyon who was born in 1882 and died in 1962. He was not only a medalist but also a sculptor who had been an exhibitor at the Royal Academy since 1908.

Much of what is known about the genealogy of Wyon family has been contributed by the Reverend Walter James Wyon who was born in 1839 and served as Clerk of the Holy Orders. In 1914 he was serving as Rector of Ufford in Suffolk. His genealogical research took him to Cologne where he examined the records of the marriage of George (I) Wyon and Maria Sibylla in Saint Columba's Church. A partial genealogical table of the Wyon family is presented in Figure 1. The names in upper case denote family members active in preparing medals, coinage, or seals. Two artistic members, Edward William and Edward Alexander, not shown in upper case have been included even though they have not influenced numismatics.

Further information on the wives of the Wyons is provided by Leonard Forrer in the book entitled "Wyons."



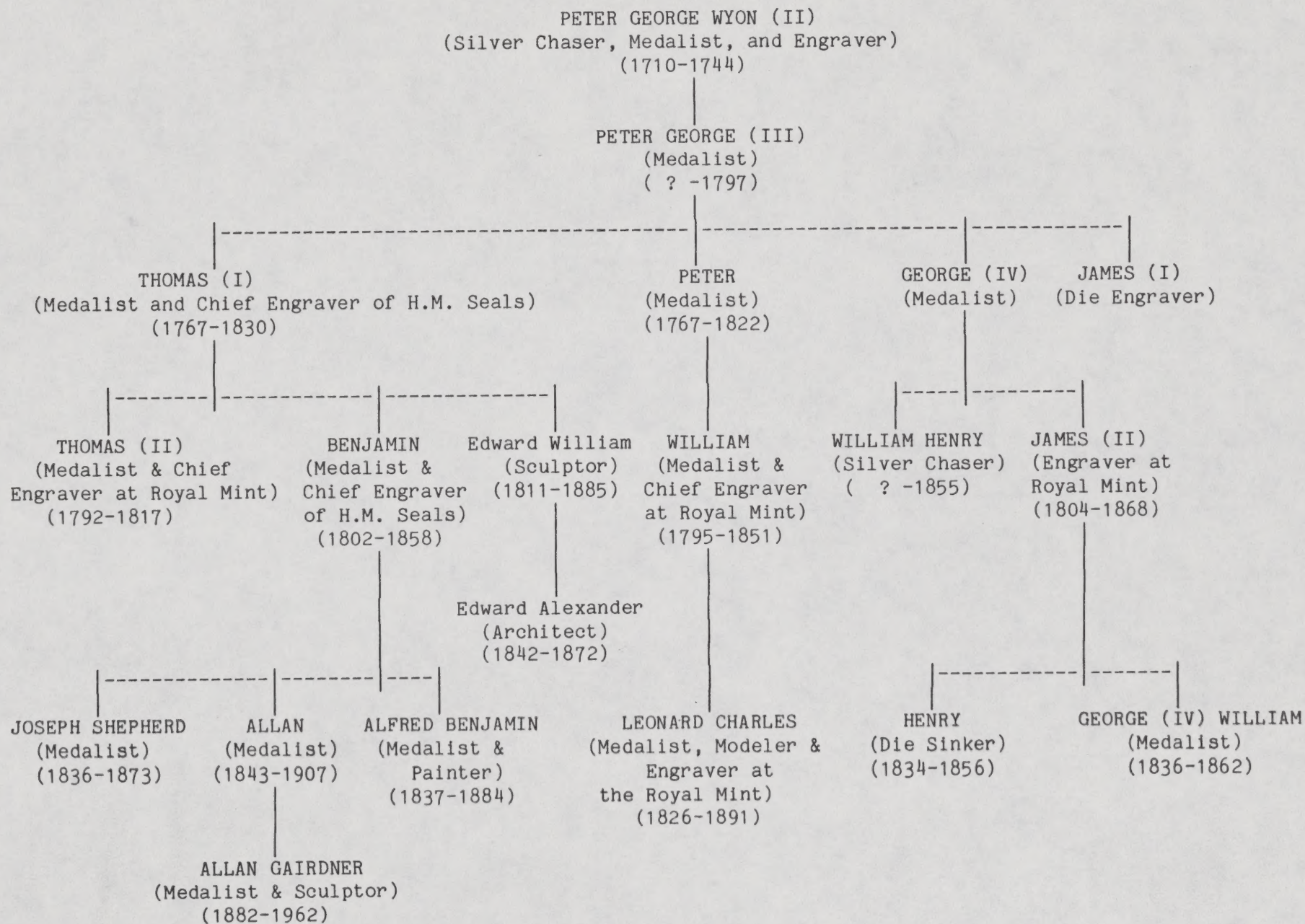


FIGURE 1 -- THE WYON FAMILY IN THE BRITISH ISLES



## BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM WYON

William, who was born in 1795 in Birmingham and died in 1851, was the eldest son of Peter Wyon. He attended school in Birmingham and in 1809 was apprenticed to his father. As a young boy, the work of the artist Flaxman impressed him greatly. The youthful engraver collaborated with his father in the execution of many dies for tokens and medals which bear Peter Wyon's signature.

In 1812 William visited Thomas Wyon, his uncle, in London. During his visit he prepared a die of the head of Ceres and entered it in the Society of Arts Competition. In May of 1813 the Society of Arts awarded William their large gold medal for his 'Ceres' and purchased the dies for use in striking the Society's prize gold medal for the Agriculture category. In 1815 William Wyon again visited his uncle Thomas (I) in London. He made London his home and aided his uncle in the engraving of seals. William cut the Great Seals for Scotland and Ireland while his cousin Thomas (II) executed the Great Seal for England. In 1816 Thomas (II) Wyon at the age of twenty-three was promoted to Chief Engraver at the Mint and William filled the post of Second Engraver.

In 1817 Thomas (II) died and the Master of the Mint, Maryborough, nominated a favorite, Signor Benendetto Pistrucci -- a noted gem engraver from Italy -- to fill the post of Chief Engraver. William Wyon resented the nomination of Pistrucci. Pistrucci did less and less work in the design of coinage and Wyon assumed more and more of the work load. In 1819 to commemorate the great event of the Battle of Waterloo which occurred in 1815, Pistrucci was chosen to design the medal to be given to allied sovereigns and the two commanders, Wellington and Blucher. (From 1819 to 1849 he worked on the dies of the Waterloo medal. Since only Wellington survived in 1849, the dies were never hardened and no medals were struck.) In 1822 Pistrucci declined to reproduce Sir Francis Chantrey's bust of the King on the coinage of that year. Pistrucci's salary was L 500 and Wyon's was L 200. This continued until 1828 when a compromise was reached between the two -- Wyon was made Chief Engraver and Pistrucci acquired the new designation of Chief Medalist. Each received an annual salary of L 350, while Wyon was awarded L 500 for his extra services from 1823 to 1828. To better understand the need for the compromise, one should note that Lord Maryborough had overlooked an Act of Parliament which decreed that no foreigner should have possession of the dies belonging to the coinage of the kingdom.

In 1830 Wyon initiated work on the coin dies of William IV. In 1831 William Wyon was elected an associate of the Royal Academy. In 1837 William Wyon executed the London Guildhall medal showing Queen Victoria on the obverse and the Guildhall on the reverse. William Wyon entered the Treasury's contest for the design of the Penny Black; his particular design was not chosen. However, his Guildhall medal did serve as the basis for the design of the Penny Black.

William Wyon was most talented as an artist, engraver, and die maker. Leonard Forrer has noted in his treatise on the Wyons --

"Wyon's head of Queen Victoria for the coinage received universal approbation and still ranks as one of the noblest productions, combining beauty of design and perfect execution, in the British numismatic series."



Sainthill's comments on Wyon's rendering of Queen Victoria are most interesting. Sainthill, a biographer of William Wyon, has written (Olla Podrida I, 65) --

"The graceful arrangement, character, and expression of the whole bust; its breadth and softness; the perfect youth, yet sweetly defined womanhood, of the features; the exquisite delicacy of the line connecting the cheek and neck; and the surpassing beauty of the lower part of the face and lip, strike us as a combination of excellences where all the truth of nature is displayed in all the perfection of art..."

In 1838 William Wyon became the first medalist to be elected as academican in the Royal Academy.

Forrer considers the Cheselden medal for St. Thomas's Hospital to be one of the most notable productions of Wyon. On the medal he showed a dead body laid out in the dissecting room -- his knowledge of anatomy, according to Forrer, defied all criticism.

In 1846 Wyon designed and engraved a Pattern Crown of the Queen -- the so-called 'Gothic Crown' -- which was issued as a coin in 1847. Since only 8,000 were coined for distribution, they hardly made it into general circulation. They were distributed among the London bankers and soon absorbed by collectors. The Gothic crown, although somewhat expensive, is greatly admired and nevertheless still pursued by some of the type collectors of milled British coinage.

His wife, Catherine Sophia, whom he had married in 1821 died in February of 1851. In September of the same year William Wyon was attacked by paralysis, which prevented the use of his left side. On October 29, 1851 he died at Brighton. William Wyon was survived by two sons and two daughters. His elder son, Leonard Charles, immediately succeeded his father as Chief Engraver at the Royal Mint.

William Wyon's signature occurs usually as W. W.; WYON; W. WYON; W. WYON, A.R.A.; or W. WYON, R. A. on coinage and medals.

He designed coins for the following Commonwealth entities: Australia, British Guiana, British Imperial, British India, British West Indies, Ceylon, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Isle of Man, Ionian Islands, Ireland, Jersey, Malta, Mauritius, New Brunswick, Penang, Straits Settlements. He also designed coins for four foreign countries -- New Granada, Mexico, Portugal and Venezuela.

William Wyon engraved the dies for Britain's first postal stationery -- the 1d pink envelope stamp used from 1841 to 1902. He also designed Britain's first three embossed adhesive stamps -- the six penny mauve, ten penny brown, and one shilling green -- all three of which bore his initials "W. W." The 1/ issued on September 11, 1847 has three color varieties -- green, deep green, and pale green; two different dies were used. The 10d issued on November 6, 1848 has two color varieties -- brown and deep brown; five different dies were used. The 6d issued on March 1, 1854 (three years after the death of Wyon) has four color varieties -- Mauve, lilac, purple, and violet; only one die was used.



### THE TREASURY COMPETITION

In January 1837 Rowland Hill produced a privately-printed pamphlet entitled "Post Office Reform-its Importance and Practicability." His pamphlet caused immediate sensation and there were two revised editions soon published. In August 1839, almost all of Rowland Hill's proposals for uniform, prepaid penny postage were included in a new Act of Parliament. Since the Act involved revenue, the Treasury and not the Post Office was given the mission to put the elements of the Act into effect.

The Treasury in 1839 organized a competition as to methods for prepayment of postage. The Treasury Minute, published in THE TIMES on September 6, 1839, invited proposals from the public and offered prizes. On September 16, 1839 Rowland Hill was appointed to a senior post at the Treasury. Hill was to be given a free hand in directing the selection, design and production of the various kinds of 'stamps' necessary for the new Penny Post system. Over 2,600 entries were received.

The majority of entrants suggested some kind of postal stationery. Only 45 suggested adhesive labels for the Penny stamp. Although prizes were given to four of the entrants, none of their designs were used. William Wyon was not one of the four winners. Most of the entries for the competition were not suitable. However, Rowland Hill from the Office of the Treasury used a few of the ideas in modified form in his report on the Treasury Competition. These included: (1) the use of watermarked paper; (2) the use of the Queen's head as the central part of the design -- suggested by both Wyon and Cheverton (who was one of the prize winners); (3) the use of an elaborate security background; and (4) the use of embossing or engraving to provide additional security against forgery. Eventually Rowland Hill's suggestions were adopted. The profile of the Queen was based on William Wyon's Guildhall Medal of 1838. Sketches of the profile were produced by Henry Corbould. Charles and Frederick Heath engraved the master die for the stamps.

The idea of adhesive stamps was not novel in 1840 -- various taxes had been paid by this method since the early 1800's in the form of embossed stamps which bore corner letters and die numbers. The principle of prepayment of postage was not unknown in 1840 -- handstruck stamps were in use. However, the combination of using adhesive labels and prepayment was new.



## EARLY VICTORIAN STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY OF GREAT BRITAIN

On May 6, 1840, Great Britain issued its first (and also the World's first) adhesive postage stamp -- the line-engraved, small crown watermark, imperforate "One Penny Black." Two days later on May 8th it issued the "Two Penny Blue."

To discourage forgers, check letters were used in the lower corners enabling stamps to be identified from 240 different positions on a sheet. At about the same time they introduced the associated One and Two Penny Mulready covers. The Post Office's stamp program was very successful. Other countries soon started to issue adhesive stamps.

Since black ink was most often used to cancel the stamps, some of the Penny Blacks were being re-used by the public, depriving the Post Office of revenues. Thus, in 1841 the imperforate, small crown watermark "One Penny Red" was introduced. In the initial printings the same eleven plates as for Penny Blacks were used. Also in 1841 the design on the Two Penny Blue was modified by adding white lines above and below the head.

Between 1847 and 1854 three imperforate embossed stamps were issued -- 6d lilac, 10d brown, and 1s green.

Between 1854 and 1857 the perf 14 and perf 16 issues with letters in the lower corners (including both small and large crown watermark varieties) of the Penny Red and Two Penny Blue were introduced.

In 1855 Britain issued perforate surface-printed stamps without letters in the corners -- 4d red, 6d lilac, and 1s green.

Between 1858 and 1870, with letters in all four corners, four new line-engraved issues were used in the mails -- 1/2d red, 1 1/2d red, and 2d blue. In parallel with the issuing of adhesive stamps, stamped envelopes and wrappers were also issued. Many more adhesive stamp issues followed. Around 1870 Britain issued its first Penny Postage Card.

Soon after the introduction of the Penny Black the collecting of adhesive postage stamps got underway. Collectors pursued stamps by plate number, sheet position, perforation number, watermark, cancellation, etc.



### CONCLUSIONS

In summing up, I hope you agree that --

- o The Wyons contributed much to numismatics and engraving;
- o Several Wyons influenced the issuance of postage;
- o The Wyons created works of art that are still being pursued by collectors from many different countries;
- o The Wyons have and will posthumously continue to enrich the lives of collectors and numismatic dealers; and
- o Two of the Wyons had a method to their madness -- William and Leonard designed coinage to be used by collectors to buy the stamps and postal stationery the two also designed. Some of the collectors might have even used these Wyon designed stamps and embossed letters to buy more of the coins and medals designed by the Wyons.



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FIGURE A-3





The VR 1d. black designed for use on mail posted from government departments. The idea of this special stamp for official mail was abandoned after only a few sheets had been used.





*The 'Maltese Cross' cancellation  
was introduced for use with the  
first British postage stamps  
issued in May 1840.*



Germany in particular a number of medallists, including Karl Schwenzer (1843-1904) and Christian Schnitzpahn, came to England to work and train in the Wyon family firm. Yet none of the later Wyons capitalised on the prestige enjoyed by William, the first and last medallist elected to the Royal Academy, to extend the possibilities of their art. They ignored the development of the cast medal and the new school of medallists that, from 1870, produced a revival of interest in medal-making in France. Their work came to seem increasingly dull and dated, and the number of commissions given to medallists began to decline. As a result of this trend, which was duplicated throughout Europe, the initiative in the development of medallic art slipped not merely from a group of professional medallists in one country to a similar group in another, but away from the medallist altogether.



290 L. Wyon:  
William Wyon, 1854

291 L. Wyon:  
International  
Exhibition of 1862,  
rev.

292 Maclise: Drawing  
for no. 291

FIGURE A-6



- 277 Pidgeon: Minerva and Mercury  
and Mercury
- 278 W. Wyon: Minerva and Mercury, 1820
- 279 W. Wyon: Pattern Crown, *rev.*
- 280 W. Wyon: Five pound piece: Una and the Lion, 1839, *rev.*
- 281 W. Wyon: 'Bun penny', Victoria, 1839
- 283a,b W. Wyon: George IV; rescue from shipwreck, 1824
- 284 W. Wyon: Cheselden medal; a body awaiting dissection, 1839, *rev.*
- 285 W. Wyon: Apothecaries' Company 'Linnaeus medal', 1830, *rev.*
- 286 W. Wyon: Newcastle to Carlisle Railway, 1840, *rev.*



FIGURE A-7





287



288

(287). As a rescuer, however, the charitable nymph, about to expose herself to us and the elements in order to wrap her sailor in a diaphanous drape, lacks conviction beside the bowler-hatted heroes on his later Royal Humane Society medal (288). This, with its contrast between the group on the raft centred round a distraught sailor in whose arms the cabin boy lies dying, and their eager rescuers, straining at the oars, ready to leap to their aid, is a masterpiece of Victorian sentiment.

Towards the end of his life Wyon became increasingly obsessed with his ancient rivalry with Pistrucci. He wrote to Edward Hawkins, then Keeper of Coins and Medals at the British Museum: 'I took the letter to Mr Gladstone he said that he perfectly agreed with every word I said and that he would as soon trust to a *Maniac* as Mr Hamilton [Pistrucci's main defender] for any judicial character wherein I was concerned or Pistrucci – so far is right but there is great necessity for watching – there will be an attempt to do something for Pistrucci . . .' In what may have been an attempt to settle the question of their relative merits once and for all Wyon confronted his rival's famous coin design (272) head on. For his medal of Prince Albert he produced a 'George and the Dragon' (289) which is both tighter in composition and more credible than the earlier work.

With William Wyon's death the great period of British medal-making moved towards its end. In his son, Leonard Charles (1826–91), and his cousins, Benjamin (1802–58), Alfred Benjamin (1837–84) and Joseph Shepard (1836–73), the family produced talented medallists who dominated the field until the end of the century. A series of interesting medals were commissioned by the Art Union of London, including Leonard Wyon's portrait of his father (290). Leonard also engraved what must rate as the epitome of the high Victorian medal after a drawing by Daniel Maclise (292) showing Britannia surrounded by the good things of life (291). The portrait style evolved by William Wyon became, if anything, even more influential in the rest of Europe after his death. From

287 W. Wyon:  
Leucothoe rescuing  
Ulysses, 1839, *rev.*

288 W. Wyon: Royal  
Humane Society  
medal, *rev.*



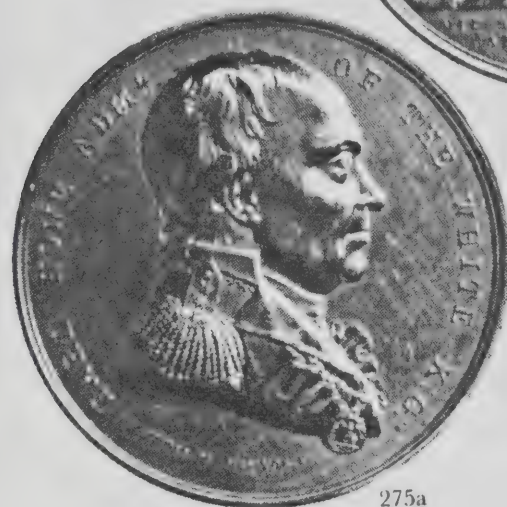
**274a,b** Pistrucci: Waterloo medal;  
Victory, horsemen and Tritons,  
1817-50

**275a,b** W. Wyon: Earl Howe;  
Battle of Ushant, *c.* 1818

**276** W. Wyon: Defeat of the  
Pindaree and Mahratta  
Confederacy, 1818, *rev.*



275b



275a



276





272



274b



273b



274a

272 Pistrucci: Wax model for George and the Dragon  
273b Pistrucci: George crowned before England, Scotland and Ireland, rev. of medal of George IV, 1821



## APPENDIX

Figure A-1 shows in great detail the obverse of William Wyon's 1838 Guildhall medal commemorating Queen Victoria's visit to the Guildhall in London.

Figure A-2 shows both the obverse and reverse of the Guildhall medal.

Figure A-3 shows the obverse of a modern facsimile of the Guildhall medal.

Figure A-4 shows the version of the Penny Black for official use by Queen. In the version of the Penny Black for public use, stars appear in the upper corners. Comparison of Figures A-4 and A-1 show remarkable similarities.

Figure A-5 shows a 'Maltese Cross' cancellation on a Penny Red. Note the stars in the upper two corners.

Figure A-6 shows two of Leonard Charles Wyon's medals. One commemorates his father who died in 1851.

Figure A-7 at the bottom shows the Cheselden medal engraved by William Wyon.

Figure A-8 shows two of William Wyon's medals -- (1) Leucothoe rescuing Ulysses and (2) the commemoration of the Royal Humane Society.

Figure A-9 shows two of William Wyon's medals -- (1) commemoration of Earl Howe at the Battle of Ushant and (2) commemoration of the Defeat of the Pindaree and Mahratta Confederacy.

Figure A-10 shows both the obverse and reverse of Pistrucci's famous Waterloo medal depicting Victory, horsemen and Tritons.





FIGURE A-1





1304



FIGURE A-2



NUMISMATIC EQUESTRIANS

by

John Alfred Nelson, WPNS



Ferencz Jozsef  
1896 A.D.



Árpád  
896 A.D.

Hungary Millennium Korona, 23mm (2.2x)

Presented  
to the  
Western Pennsylvania Numismatic Society  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 6 March 1990



## FOREWORD

My paper and slides tonight on Numismatic Equestrians were originally presented to WPNS at its 6 October 1964 meeting. Since that time, many deserving riders have appeared as new designs on coins or medals, but none of those equestrians will be covered tonight.

In the three decades since its initiation, my numismatic equestrian collection developed, peaked and declined. Over the years many riders moved to other stables, many being some distance from Pittsburgh. My succeeding and prime interest shifted to the coinage of the Kingdom of Sweden, and was to a large degree responsible for the departure of many of the riders.

The few dozen stalwart horses and their riders who stayed with me over those years are here tonight for your study following my presentation.



## NUMISMATIC EQUESTRIANS

by John A. Nelson  
Western Pennsylvania Numismatic Society  
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A numismatic equestrian may be defined as the representation on numismatic material of a horse and its rider. A collection with this theme is among the most interesting of topical choices possible, and can be of a strict or a liberal definition of an equestrian. Equestrian, by definition is "one who rides on horseback". This could be used to determine the criterion for admitting a piece to a collection, but if used, it would preclude those interesting pieces featuring horsemen standing near their mounts, riders in horse-drawn sulkies, and land and sea chariots, all of which are allowed within the broader definition of the author.

Very few coins of other animals include a human being along with the beast. This fact, coupled with that of the portrayed person frequently being of historical note makes for a bonus topic. Both history and art of living beings are presented in numismatic tableau.

Coins of ancient Greece and Rome made extensive use of animal figures, including both free and ridden horses, or, more usually, drawing war chariots. The quality both of coin design and metallic content degraded during the decline of Rome, and for centuries after her collapse. Workmanship of an unrefined grade prevailed. The late Middle Ages saw the renaissance of equestrian designs, though crude in comparison to the artistry of ancient times, and quality through the centuries up to the present.

Equestrian coins in these early centuries, aside from being artistically pleasing, had advantages over many other designs. In that age of more extreme contrasts, both economically and socially, the circulation of horse and rider pieces exalted the status of the ruling class, and well may have reflected the alter ego of many a king so-portrayed to his subjects. One can surmise that the effigy of their mounted ruler served as a reminder to the people of their duty of fealty to their ruler - to whom they must be subservient, and for whom they must be willing to do battle, with the very possible consequence of death. These coins, differing so from the more common design of a ruler head or bust may have been known, possibly, as "riders" or "horsemen" in everyday business use. The equestrian designs may have helped denote to the poorly-educated the monetary worth of the piece.



One object of this paper is to review a troop of numismatic equestrians formed up from allegories, legends, and both popular and lesser-known personages. It is not a compendium of all equestrians appearing in the popular numismatic reference books. Rather, it is a commentary on but a few of the many riders, based upon information gleaned from historical and numismatic works.

#### THE DRAGON-SLAYER

The first place of equestrian prominence goes without contest to Saint George in the well-known act of slaying the dragon, symbol of Good over sin and the devil, in early Christian times.

Saint George, according to legend became a Roman soldier in the reign of Diocletian, was converted to Christianity, was arrested, tortured and put to death on 23 April 303 A.D., at Nicomedia, a city just east of present day Istanbul. Legend tells of Saint George using his magic sword Ascalon to slay a dragon to which the king's daughter was being sacrificed. The Crusaders venerated Saint George, making him the Patron Saint of England in year 1350.

The Saint George and the dragon design used extensively on reverses of crowns and sovereigns of England, and tokens of the Bank of Upper Canada is the product of Benedetto Pistrucci, Italian medalist who went to England in 1815 to succeed Thomas Wyon as Chief Engraver to the Royal Mint. His design shows Saint George as a Roman centurion, naked except for cape, plumed helmet, about to render the coup-de-grâce with sword Ascalon to the javelin-wounded dragon. A spirited bare-back stallion carries the warrior. The design is executed in the classical style for a mounted equestrian, with the rider intentionally disproportionately large, so as to promote him as the center of interest, in this case, Good triumphing over evil. This design, first appearing on the George III crown of 1818 was used extensively as the reverse of crowns through 1902, and sovereigns, to the present time. In 1951 it appeared again as the reverse of the George VI crown, struck in a 1:3 copper-nickel alloy. This issue is sometimes considered to be a "hidden" commemorative, since its special purpose is relegated to the message on its edge, reading MDCCCLI CIVIUM INDUSTRIA FLORET CIVITAS MCMLI, "The State Flourishes Through the Industry of Its People, 1851-1951". This coin commemorates the centenary of the International Exhibition of 1851, held in London.



The 1935 silver anniversary crown of George V carries a modernistic motif of the Saint George and the Dragon theme, and was the first truly commemorative British coin. This Percy Metcalfe design has George encased in heavy 15th century armor, seated stiffly erect in the saddle of a powerful war horse that is treading on the lanced-through dragon. An interesting sidelight is the absence of a helmet on Saint George. Perhaps this was standard for the properly equipped dragon slayer of that day! The rather diminutive rider, as compared with Pistrucci's is equipped with a formidable-looking Claymor, carried tiredly erect. The overall feeling is one of cold, mechanical boredom, as compared with the action-packed scene by Pistrucci, the classical stylist. The contrasting designs are interesting renditions of a common theme.

Saint George triumphs also on various issues of Russian copper coins, 1/4 to 10 kopecks, beginning in 1704 under Peter I, and terminating with Catherine II in 1796. These pieces carry the value on a ribbon beneath the slaying scene, and will probably see increased demand, with interest in this country likely to be spurred by the recent marketing of current issues by the USSR.

Saint George appears weekly in Coin World in Russell Rulau's "Numismatic Alphabet" masthead. This is an English pattern crown of 1910 designed by Wyon, though never adopted for actual coinage.

Brass or copper counters of various dates carrying the head of Queen Victoria have an uncrowned or crowned rider on its reverse, inscribed TO HANNOVER 1837. This rider represents Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, the eldest surviving brother of the then-recently deceased William IV, King of England and Hanover. In his satirical role of Saint George riding over a one, two or three-headed dragon, Ernest is en route Hanover to receive its crown. Under the ancient Salic law of the Franks, succession to the Hanoverian crown was restricted to the male line, and upon Victoria's accession to the throne of England, Hanover became separated from Britain, after 125 years under her rule. These tokens were made in sovereign or half-sovereign size, and were sometimes gilded or plated, so as to be readily passed off as Victorian gold coins. Some designs carry the initials or name of their engraver/die-sinker: A&M (Allen and Moore of Birmingham), Lauer (Nuremberg, Germany), and J.W.. The latter set is not identified to any one maker, though it is thought by one author to relate to a Birmingham engraver.



## VICTORS OF TANNENBERG

The Teutonic Knights of Germany, originally dedicated to Christianizing the Slavs, had transformed into taking by the sword whatever land they could, creating a harsh serfdom of the peasants. The Lithuanians, under the leadership of Grand Duke Vytautas defeated the Knights in a decisive battle near Tannenberg, Germany in 1410. Of some 100,000 Knights, 18,000 were slain and 14,000 were taken prisoners. This victory at Tannenberg preserved the union of Poland and Lithuania, and signaled the decline of power of the Teutonic Knights.

The coinage of modern Lithuania (1925-38) features the symbol of a charging mounted knight on the reverse of all issues except a 1938 commemorative. This knight is to Lithuania as the eagle is to the United States. A bust of Vytautas the Great is used on the 10 Litu coin of 1936. The charging knight could well-represent Vytautas as a fitting tribute to his preservation of Lithuania at Tannenberg, so long ago.

## THE TEN ARROWS

The Magyars originated in the land east of the Ural Mountains, migrated westward, and lived from the fifth to the ninth century A.D. near the mouth of the Don River. Their tribal federation was called "On-Ogur" (Ten Arrows), Slavic derivation of the name "Hungarian". Hostile tribes from the east forced another migration, and in the year 896 A.D. the Magyars were lead over the Carpathian Mountains to the rich Danube River basin by their powerful chieftan, Árpád.

This mountain crossing by the Magyars is observed as the founding of the Hungarian nation, and was commemorated in a 1000th year anniversary silver coin and many medals, in 1896. Their obverses are generally the coronation scene or bust of the contemporary emperor, Franz Joseph (1848-1916), with the reverse showing Árpád on horseback, leading the march into the new valley.

The 1896 commemorative 1 Korona coin, of only 23 mm is the smallest one appearing in Becker's World Pageant of Commemorative Coins. Becker identifies the rider as Franz Joseph, whereas it actually is Árpád. The Magyar chieftan is dressed in a tunic and cape, wears a pointed helmet, and carries a dirk in his belt, while a dished shield hangs from his saddle. This reverse is quite novel, in that it carries neither date nor lettering, the full surface being dedicated to the tableau. The obverse, with the bust of emperor Ferencz Jozsef



reads AZ EZERÉVES MAGYARORSZÁG EMLÉKÉRE 1896 ( In Memory of the 1000th Anniversary of Hungary 1896 ). The edge gives the emperor's motto in incuse lettering: BIZALMAM AZ ŐSI ERÉNYBEN ( My Faith is in the Ancient Spirit ).

#### SKULL-CUP CAPER

Krum was a khan, or chieftan of the ancient pagan Bulgars, who lived, seemingly, to fight and to kill. Invading Macedonia, he captured 1100 pounds of gold and burned the town of Sardica. In retaliation, the Greek emperor, Nicephorus burned Krum's capital. In revenge, Krum trapped and annihilated the Greek army in a mountain pass, killed Nicephorus and made a drinking cup from his skull! During the seige of Constantinople, Krum died from a broken blood vessel, and the city was spared from capture, sack and pillage.

Bulgaria honored the memory of their pagan founder in its 5 and 10 Leva nickel coins of 1930 and the iron issue of 1941. The equestrian, in Mongol style garb, trimmed boots and quiver of arrows is identified as KRUM, in Cyrillic letters. The field of the coin carries 814, the year of Krum's death. A speared lion lies lifeless on the ground, with what appears to be a wolf or a dog running nearby. In his Catalogue of the World's Most Popular Coins, Reinfeld identifies the equestrian as "a Cavalier of Madara". A small town of Madaras is located in southern Hungary, some 150 miles away from present Bulgaria. This fact would not seem to endorse Reinfeld's attribution to any degree, however, and it is assumed to be an anomaly.

#### CHIVALRY'S CROWN

Count John of Luxemburg founded a new dynasty in Bohemia in 1310. A valient warrior, he built a reputation expressed in the contemporary thought "Nothing can be done without the help of God and the King of Bohemia". John contracted a disease while on a crusade in Lithuania in 1336, and it left him completely blind. Learning that Edward III of England had invaded Normandy, he lent the fighting services of his five hundred knights to Philip IV of France. Count John had himself bound between the horses of two knights, and fought at Crécy, despite the retreat of the French, whose cavalry had been decimated by arrows from English longbows some 450 yards away. Surrounded by fifty knights in battle, John died with sword in hand, saying "So will it God, it shall not be said that a king of Bohemia flies from the battlefield". His



body was sent by Edward of England to John's son with the message, "This day has fallen the crown of chivalry".

A beautiful set of 20, 50 and 100 franc coins in silver was issued in 1946 by Luxembourg to commemorate the 600th anniversary of their beloved hero's death. The obverse carries the head of Prince John of Luxembourg, and the reverse, the famous charging namesake, John the Blind, of Bohemia, in full knight's armor. He is on a powerful war horse whose head is protected by a chamfron, and an attractive but impractical fabric trapping hangs down over the horse's legs. Below the horse appears the date of the fatal Battle of Crécy, August 26, 1346.

#### EQUESTRIENNES

Numismatic equestriennes are not numerous, but the interesting design or history of those who do appear compensate to a large degree for the few riders.

Mythology tells that Thetis lived in the depths of the sea, and was the favorite of the fifty Nereids ( ocean nymphs ), daughters of Nereus, and, more notably, Thetis was the mother of Achilles. To make Achilles invulnerable, Thetis dipped her young son into the river Styx. As a man, Achilles was killed at the seige of Troy by an arrow piercing the heel tendon, which had not been wetted by the magical water of the Styx when his mother dipped him as an infant.

Greece featured Thetis in the designs of two coinage issues. The 1910 and 1911 silver coins of 1 and 2 drachmas show her holding a shield and seated next to a hippocampus. Having the head and forelegs of a horse, and the body and tail of a dolphin, the hippocampus really belongs to mythology! This design is an impressive miniature of a sculpture of antiquity - as though taken from a sarcophagus or a temple frieze. Thetis reappears on the 20 drachmas silver of 1960, although her mount is now a more conventional land horse, vice a hippocampus.

Lady Godiva might well lay claim to being the most famous equestrienne of all time. She was married to Leofric, Lord of Coventry, and thought to have lived 1040-1080. In sympathy with the townsfolk, Lady G pleaded with Leofric to repeal a heavy tax he had levied. He cleverly agreed to abolish the tax, but only upon his seemingly impossible condition that Lady Godiva first ride naked through town. Three versions exist of what then happened. One legend says that Lady G made the ride through the crowded marketplace, suffering the stares and cat-calls. The second story is that Godiva issued a proclamation that all people were to keep indoors, shutter the windows, and look elsewhere.



Everyone in town, save a tailor named Tom, honored her proclamation. Tom, thoroughly tantalized, cracked his blinds and peeked at the beautiful Godiva, and, for his naughty act is said to have been stricken with blindness, right there on the spot! The third and last version of the event had Lady Godiva made magically invisible throughout her sensuous jaunt through town. In any event, the legend of the ride wasn't written up until the year 1237, some two centuries after the reputed ride. May 1678 saw the institution of a Lady Godiva procession as a part of the Coventry Fair, celebrated at intervals until 1826.

Lady Godiva is numismatically honored on the popular Coventry half-penny token of 1793. It sports a Godiva clad in but her long tresses, riding side-saddle on a barebacked mount. Though the presentation of this female figure is hardly complimentary, certainly not by space-age standards, this piece has enjoyed special appeal, especially by American collectors. The phrase PRO BONO PUBLICO ( For the People's Good ) appearing on the token relates to the behind-the-scenes reason for the seemingly benevolent act. Some authorities consider this piece to have been issued concurrent with one of the Coventry fairs. It is a true token in the sense that its edge carries a promise for its conversion to legal tender: PAYABLE AT THE WAREHOUSE OF ROBERT REYNOLDS & CO.

Queen Elizabeth of Britain enjoys the distinction of appearing twice as a regal numismatic equestrienne. The highly publicised crown of 1953 issued in conjunction with her coronation shows her riding sidesaddle, in the uniform of the Grenadier Guards, the unit assigned to the protection of Buckingham Palace. The queen's motto: FAITH AND TRUTH I BEAR UNTO YOU appears in the edge lettering.

Elizabeth appears again on the British Caribbean Territories 50 cent piece of 1955 in a highly artful and allegorical pose, standing near her seashell throne while being carried on the backs of two hippocampi. Her left hand bears the orb, symbol of regal authority, while the right one supports a trident, the three-tined spear associated with Neptune as ruler of the Sea. This allegory was pictured similarly in the Barbados 1792 penny and half-penny, showing King George III seated on an ornate carved throne being drawn on the surface of the water in the manner of a land chariot. This design is found on an 18th century French jeton, showing Neptune with his trident held aloft, and inscribed: AEQUORA LUISTRANDO PACAT ( He calms the seas by surveying ), in reference to Louis, whose head graces the obverse.



It is the reluctance of many countries to feature more or less stereotyped designs from one ruler after another that has enhanced the growing field of topical collecting by numismatists interested in "something different".

Mexico contributes to the last rider in the quartette of equestriennes with its silver pesos of 1910-1914, popularly known south of the border as "caballitos" ( little horses ). The allegorical figure of Liberty on horseback, carrying aloft the torch of Freedom and the olive branch of Peace, ahead of the rising sun is portrayed. The allegory alludes to the centenary of the birth of the revolt against Spain that was fostered by Hidalgo, a gutsy priest who on September 16, 1810 proclaimed his Grito de Dolores, "Long live our Lady of Guadalupe! Long live Independence! Death to the Spaniards!"

It is of interesting note that of the seven different designs involving women riders and just described, only the 1951 crown of Great Britain is not associated with legend, mythology or allegory. Even though few in numbers, the ladies provide widely diverse backgrounds and beautiful design subjects!

#### WAR AND CIRCUS

Chariot drivers are not equestrians in the true sense, since the definition calls for the person to ride upon, not in back of, the horse. These coins are so attractive, though, that the author has included them within the scope of his collecting, and closes with a few remarks on them.

The chariot was developed by the ancients primarily as a war machine. A heavy chariot pulled by thundering horses was indeed an object of respect by the enemy! If deployed in large numbers, and equipped with an archer in each hard at work, and/or wheel hubs fitted with sickle-shaped blades, their effect could be devastating.

Sturdily built of wood with iron or bronze fittings and tires, they were drawn by two, three, or four horses, giving rise to the Latin classifications of biga, triga, and quadriga. Ancient coins shown trigas infrequently, and from this it might be inferred that these rigs were not popular. Perhaps obvious driver visibility-ahead problems, and others, such as hitching and driving quirks put it in third place as a design. Wheels, oddly enough, were made with very few spokes, with four the predominating quantity on ancient coins. It is hard to believe that such wheels could stand up long to the pounding that these springless bodies took!



Chariot racing was popular with the Greeks, and later, with the Romans, who held events in the circus. Races involved seven laps of the 1,600 foot long course, or almost five miles. This was run in replica in the movie "Ben Hur" in 14 minutes, for an average velocity of about eighteen miles per hour.

It was customary to open the events by a procession in which the "simulacra", images of the gods and of the deified imperial family were carried in ponderous wagons pulled by horses, mules, or elephants.

Ancient Syracuse issued a magnificent silver decadrachma to celebrate the repulsion of an Athenian invasion of Sicily in 413 B.C.. It features a battle quadriga in action, and beneath it are represented the arms taken as booty from the Athenians and given as prizes in the games which celebrated the victory. This design by the artist Euaenetus is among the more beautiful pieces of the ancients.

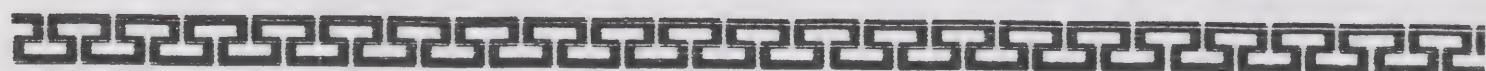
Bigas and quadrigas are found as fairly frequent reverses, especially of the Roman Republic coinages, with the triga seldom shown, as mentioned earlier. In its effort to evoke glory of ancient Rome, Italy featured a biga on the 10 lire coin of 1926-34. Romagnoli, its designer, rather than risking the chance of marring the beauty of the lead horse, left off all its harness, save the rein and bit. The 1 and 2 lire coins of 1908-13 have four mules beautifully sculpted by Calandra rearing "in step" in the traces of a "god wagon". A similar design motif was used for the 1915-17 coins, with four nervous stallions in the place of the almost too-perfect line-up of mules in the previous series. Each of the designs has FERT (strength) displayed on the sideboard of the wagon, and on the coin edge.

The 500 lire silver coin of Italy struck in 1961 features a modernistic design of a biga and driver in fast action. This highly-stylized piece was issued to commemorate the centenary of the proclamation of Victor Emanuel II as King of Italy, following the annexation of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to his domain.

#### CONCLUSION

The area of numismatic equestrians is rich in history and art alike, with the riders mentioned in this paper being but samples of the ever-expanding stable. Perhaps your interest has been whetted sufficiently to induce you to dig into the background of the next numismatic rider you find crossing your path!





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Its Angry Coinage

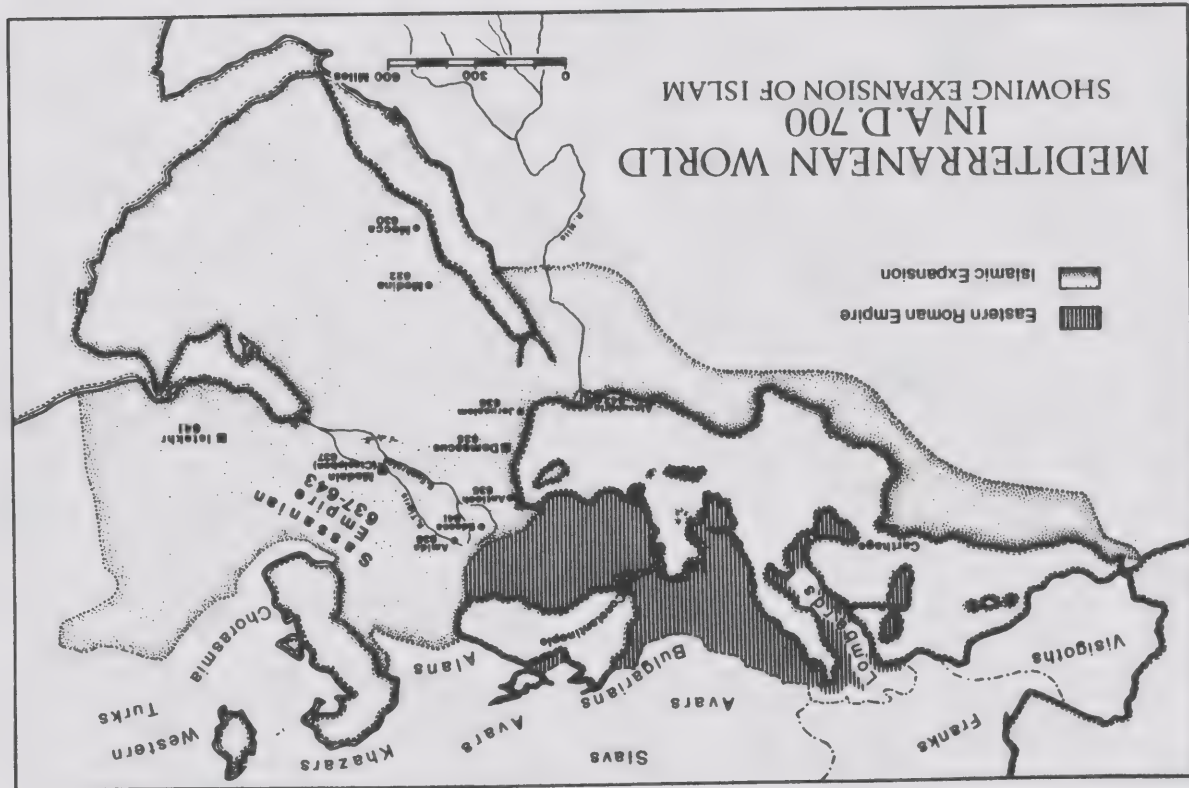
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## THE ERUPTION OF ISLAM IN THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.

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We, as numismatists, are, or at least should be, in many ways amateur historians. We certainly should be far more aware of important eras than people in an average cross-section of our society, because one of the crucial aspects of the study of coins and tokens is the historical information which makes the artifacts we collect socially significant. One of the most trite and often repeated phrases that one hears is that those who do not learn the lessons of history are doomed to repeat them. Yet, I am afraid that we do not always learn our lessons well. Rather, I should say that we pick and choose those lessons that we see as more significant and, sadly, ignore those that do not strike our fancy.

Naturally, everybody is all too aware of the evils of the German Nazi regime, and of the resultant holocaust. The media, the movies and a host of current fiction authors will never let us forget it, and that is as it should be. We, our children and our children's children are doomed to have to relive the grim reminders of man's inhumanity to man over and over during our lifetimes. However, these tragic events were just a part of this century, and a horrible part of our own Western culture.

But what of other cultures and other times? Is there no valuable lesson for us in the historic archives of people and nations who are far removed from us in terms of language, customs, time and ideology? I am sure that there are many indeed. However, our schools and literature often barely mention such events in passing, and we live blissfully unaware of the background and habits of many of our potential friends and enemies with whom we share this planet.

The story of which I speak tonight is about just such a situation. It should concern us all because it sheds a light on the history, culture and ideology of a group of people with whom we are often at odds today. I refer to the emergence of the Islamic Empire in the seventh century A.D. In their book, "Wealth of the Roman World, AD 300-700," J.P.C. Kent and K.S. Painter state, "The explosive expansion of Islam and the Arab world in the second quarter of the seventh century remains one of the most astonishing and significant facts of history." In an article in the February, 1958 issue of The Numismatist entitled, Militant Coins of Early Islam, Gleason L. Archer, Jr. called the emergence of the Islamic Empire "One of the most remarkable episodes in history."

Consider that for over 4000 years these Arabs had coexisted as dis-united, uncultured, poverty-stricken and quarrelsome tribes who never acknowledged a common authority or loyalty of any sort. Religiously, they were superstitious worshipers of idols. Culturally, they were nomadic and had never progressed beyond the primitive agricultural stage with very few exceptions. They were hemmed in by powerful and highly organized neighbors. To the north and west laid the sophisticated Eastern Roman Empire led by the brilliant and able general, the Emperor Heraclius. The centuries-old Sassanian Empire which had proved itself an able foe of Rome itself was situated to the northwest.



Suddenly, the Prophet Mohammed burst onto the scene. Everything changed! By the time Mohammed died in 632 AD, Arabia was united monotheistically. Within two years the Muslims erupted into Syria. In 635 AD Damascus fell. In 636 the Muslims defeated the strongest Byzantine forces at the Yarmuk River, and by 637 they entered Jerusalem. They drove the Persians out of Iraq in 639, and all of Mesopotamia fell under the Muslim heel. Also in 639, 20,000 Arab troops invaded Egypt and successfully laid siege to the mighty fortified city of Alexandria with its garrison of 50,000 troops and its powerful naval forces. Within one year Alexandria capitulated, and all of Egypt laid at its conqueror's feet. Iran was defeated in 641. The Mohammedan forces pushed east and west until, at the turn of the eighth century, the empire extended from the Indus Valley and Afghanistan in the east to Morocco and the Atlantic shore of Spain! By the year 712, the Moslem troops had crossed the Pyrenees into France in the west, and in the east they threatened the very borders of China!

How could it happen? How could these illiterate and undisciplined sons of the desert shatter nations which held vast advantages over them in terms of numbers, wealth, knowledge and sophistication? There were several contributing factors. The Christian Byzantine government busied itself crushing various heretical sects, such as the Jacobites and the Nestorians and paid little attention to the Muslims until they never knew what hit them. The Syrian Arabs were oppressed by the Greek ruling classes and felt more akin to the Muslims. The Egyptian Copts hated their Greek rulers and welcomed the Muslims as liberators. The Sassanians had suffered military reversals from the Romans under Heraclius in 628, and the Semetics there chafed under Iranian rule.

However, even after taking all these considerations into account, there is only one underlying reason that made this military upheaval possible. That reason was not economic, not political, not racial! It was the religious fanaticism of the Arab converts to the new teachings of Mohammed! The old idols and superstitions had been cast off! The Muslims as one embraced the new belief that one true, omnipotent God spoke to them through his prophet revealing the path to salvation and eternal life. They were assured of God's pardon if they were faithful to the new dogma, and they were confident of a heaven in which all earthly pleasures were magnified!

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But what a difference between this new Muslim coinage and all that had gone before! The earliest coinage of Greek Lydia was uniface and bore a crude likeness of a deity or a bird or animal associated with their worship. There were no legends. Next came obverse and reverse strikes, followed shortly by the use of letters or a short legend identifying the issuing state. Then followed realistic portraits of rulers and tyrants. Then the Roman Republic issued coins without portraits of living persons, but during the reign of Julius Caesar the human rulers became suddenly deified, and he and all of his family members were eligible for portrayal on the Roman coins.

Now - suddenly - the new Muslim Caliphate coinage featured absolutely no portraits whatever! No ruler's name, no nation, no people were mentioned. The coinage simply became the currency of the new theocracy of Allah on earth. Only three names were permitted on the coins: the names of Allah Himself, the Prophet Mohammed, and the city of mintage (and that only to more easily apprehend debasers).

My single dirham on display tonight is typical of the entire Caliphate series. The exact same pattern was maintained for centuries. The only features which changed from coin to coin over the years were the mint city and date. This dirham, approximately 26 millimeters in diameter, was struck during the reign of Caliph Al Mansur in AD 773. This can be determined from the Muslim date on the coin, AH 157. It was minted in what is now Baghdad, then known as Madinat al Salam, which inappropriately translates into City of Peace.

The legend is a theological manifesto - a document of religious propaganda which passed through the hand of every subject in the Muslim empire with every commercial transaction. These coins shouted the same creed to all who touched them, whether Christian Jew or pagan. Perhaps the coin itself contributed to break down the loyalty of Christians and Zoroastrians to their ancestral faith. The center field in the obverse reads, "There is no God but Allah alone. There is no associate to Him." The statement affirmed two propositions - that there is only the one true God, and that there is no division of that Godhead into a Trinity. The obverse border legend reads, "In the name of Allah: may He avert evil from this dirham, in Madinat al Salam, year seven and fifty and one hundred." The Muslim calendar is reckoned from Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina, 622 AD.

The reverse legend is a militant manifesto intended to strike terror into the heart of every infidel. The center reads, "Allah is One; Allah is the Eternal; He did not beget and He was not begotten, and He has never had an equal." This phrase is copied from the Sura 112, the Unitarian manifesto of the Koran. Consider the implications of the message. God never beget a son. Christ, born of Mary, could not be God. There is no such thing as a Trinitarian Godhead, all being equal, because God is, by definition, unequalled. The Gospel is untrue. So taught Mohammed, and so the Muslims have believed ever since. Mohammed called the Christians "Pluralists."



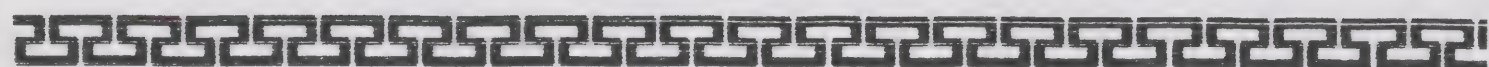
The Christians of the time opposed the Muslims because they thought of their God as a God of love. If God were Unitarian, then before creation there could have been nothing to love. But if there were Three Persons, love could have existed eternally. Also, if Christ had not been God, He could not have mediated with His Father by His death to save mankind and forgive all sin. The Muslims were not concerned with such concepts of forgiveness or justice. Allah could simply forgive whom He pleased, and He had no reason to satisfy any moral law. Allah was pleased to forgive Muslims who accepted His authority as defined by the Koran. This explains the power of the reverse center legend from the Koran.

The reverse border reads as follows: "Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah; He sent Him with true guidance and the religion of truth to make it triumphant over every religion, even though the pluralists disapprove." Note the sublime confidence. Muslims were winning everywhere. Allah would continue to support His warriors and servants as they forced their victims to choose between the Koran and death. All mankind would soon be Muslim!

History has not yet vindicated their position. In 732 the Muslim wave was at its highest crest. All of France was within their grasp. But Charles Martel repelled their forces at the battle of Tours. They were forced to retreat into Spain. Constantinople rallied to push them back. The Greeks pushed them out of Asia Minor until the Turks once again arose. By the end of the eleventh century Crusaders reclaimed the Holy Land. Muslim nations were once again disunited and at variance with each other. Christianity became the most powerful religion in numbers. Except for the warlike Turks, the Muslim domain stagnated and had little effect on the outside world.

There is a great lesson of history to be learned from the seventh century Muslim eruption: When a nation dedicates itself to the will and glory of God, forgetting human pride and worldly goods, and bears a clear and unashamed testimony and witness of their faith, they become a power with which to be reckoned. From our modern western prospective, the Muslim creed was riddled with grave and baneful errors, but their courage in standing up for their faith put many a Christian to shame then, since, and even now! We would not long have a problem with the orthodox Muslims if the followers of the Church of Christ threw themselves into the Lord's cause with as keen an ardor and as forthright a testimony as did the illiterate Bedouins of the seventh century who undertook to subdue the world to the religion of Allah.





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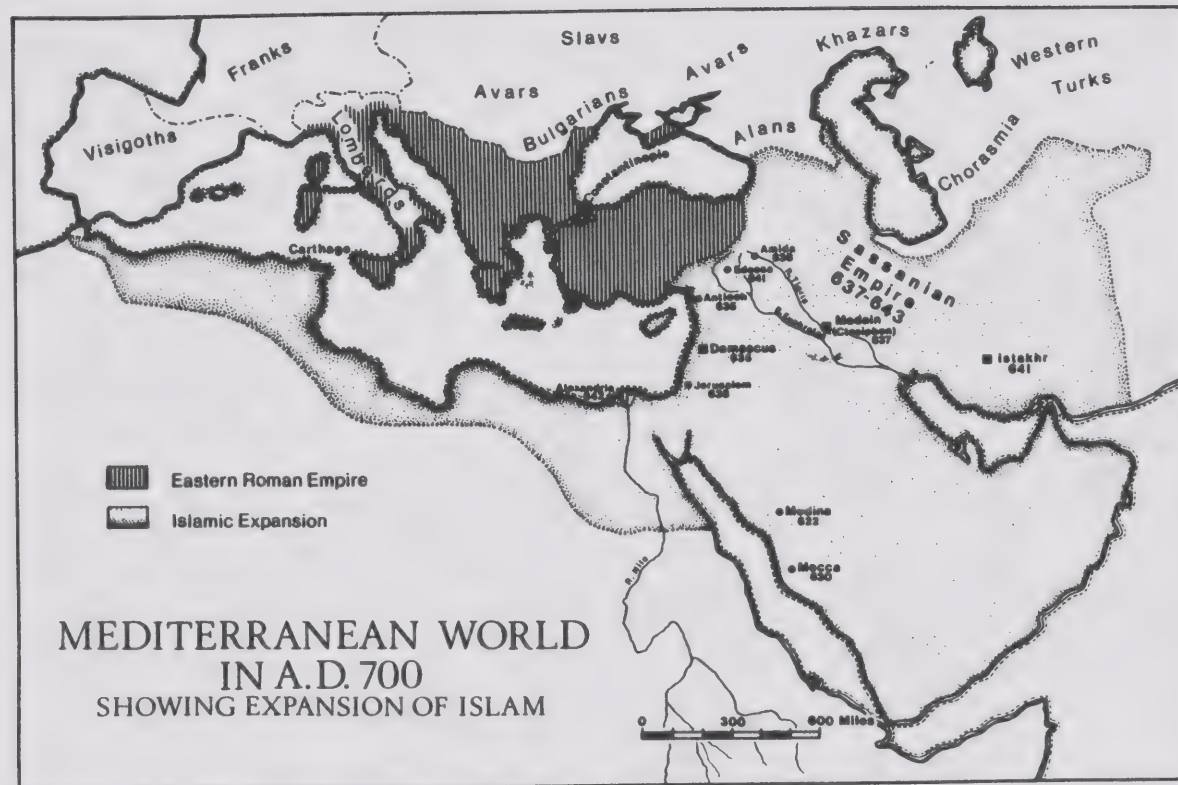
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But what a difference between this new Muslim coinage and all that had gone before! The earliest coinage of Greek Lydia was uniface and bore a crude likeness of a deity or a bird or animal associated with their worship. There were no legends. Next came obverse and reverse strikes, followed shortly by the use of letters or a short legend identifying the issuing state. Then followed realistic portraits of rulers and tyrants. Then the Roman Republic issued coins without portraits of living persons, but during the reign of Julius Caesar the human rulers became suddenly deified, and he and all of his family members were eligible for portrayal on the Roman coins.

Now - suddenly - the new Muslim Caliphate coinage featured absolutely no portraits whatever! No ruler's name, no nation, no people were mentioned. The coinage simply became the currency of the new theocracy of Allah on earth. Only three names were permitted on the coins: the names of Allah Himself, the Prophet Mohammed, and the city of mintage (and that only to more easily apprehend debasers).

My single dirham on display tonight is typical of the entire Caliphate series. The exact same pattern was maintained for centuries. The only features which changed from coin to coin over the years were the mint city and date. This dirham, approximately 26 millimeters in diameter, was struck during the reign of Caliph Al Mansur in AD 773. This can be determined from the Muslim date on the coin, AH 157. It was minted in what is now Baghdad, then known as Madinat al Salam, which inappropriately translates into City of Peace.

The legend is a theological manifesto - a document of religious propaganda which passed through the hand of every subject in the Muslim empire with every commercial transaction. These coins shouted the same creed to all who touched them, whether Christian Jew or pagan. Perhaps the coin itself contributed to break down the loyalty of Christians and Zoroastrians to their ancestral faith. The center field in the obverse reads, "There is no God but Allah alone. There is no associate to Him." The statement affirmed two propositions - that there is only the one true God, and that there is no division of that Godhead into a Trinity. The obverse border legend reads, "In the name of Allah: may He avert evil from this dirham, in Madinat al Salam, year seven and fifty and one hundred." The Muslim calendar is reckoned from Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina, 622 AD.

The reverse legend is a militant manifesto intended to strike terror into the heart of every infidel. The center reads, "Allah is One; Allah is the Eternal; He did not beget and He was not begotten, and He has never had an equal." This phrase is copied from the Sura 112, the Unitarian manifesto of the Koran. Consider the implications of the message. God never beget a son. Christ, born of Mary, could not be God. There is no such thing as a Trinitarian Godhead, all being equal, because God is, by definition, unequalled. The Gospel is untrue. So taught Mohammed, and so the Muslims have believed ever since. Mohammed called the Christians "Pluralists."



The Christians of the time opposed the Muslims because they thought of their God as a God of love. If God were Unitarian, then before creation there could have been nothing to love. But if there were Three Persons, love could have existed eternally. Also, if Christ had not been God, He could not have mediated with His Father by His death to save mankind and forgive all sin. The Muslims were not concerned with such concepts of forgiveness or justice. Allah could simply forgive whom He pleased, and He had no reason to satisfy any moral law. Allah was pleased to forgive Muslims who accepted His authority as defined by the Koran. This explains the power of the reverse center legend from the Koran.

The reverse border reads as follows: "Mohammed is the Apostle of Allah; He sent Him with true guidance and the religion of truth to make it triumphant over every religion, even though the pluralists disapprove." Note the sublime confidence. Muslims were winning everywhere. Allah would continue to support His warriors and servants as they forced their victims to choose between the Koran and death. All mankind would soon be Muslim!

History has not yet vindicated their position. In 732 the Muslim wave was at its highest crest. All of France was within their grasp. But Charles Martel repelled their forces at the battle of Tours. They were forced to retreat into Spain. Constantinople rallied to push them back. The Greeks pushed them out of Asia Minor until the Turks once again arose. By the end of the eleventh century Crusaders reclaimed the Holy Land. Muslim nations were once again disunited and at variance with each other. Christianity became the most powerful religion in numbers. Except for the warlike Turks, the Muslim domain stagnated and had little effect on the outside world.

There is a great lesson of history to be learned from the seventh century Muslim eruption: When a nation dedicates itself to the will and glory of God, forgetting human pride and worldly goods, and bears a clear and unashamed testimony and witness of their faith, they become a power with which to be reckoned. From our modern western prospective, the Muslim creed was riddled with grave and baneful errors, but their courage in standing up for their faith put many a Christian to shame then, since, and even now! We would not long have a problem with the orthodox Muslims if the followers of the Church of Christ threw themselves into the Lord's cause with as keen an ardor and as forthright a testimony as did the illiterate Bedouins of the seventh century who undertook to subdue the world to the religion of Allah.



United States  
Military Payment Certificates

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BY

PAT M<sup>c</sup>BRIDE

JULY 3, 1990





## MILITARY PAYMENT CERTIFICATES

September 16, 1946 was the beginning of an era of a colorful and exotic issue of paper money in United States history. MPC's were first introduced in Europe at this time.

Although World War II was over, troops still remained to maintain order and assist in rebuilding. It had been government policy to pay servicemen in the currency of the country in which they were stationed. In post war Germany it was the Mark issue of Allied Military Currency. At that time a soldier would be able to convert local currency into U.S. Dollars. The problem was the U.S. Government was converting far more Marks or other local currencies than it initially paid out in wages. The deficit had grown to \$530,775,440 by the time the first MPC's were put into circulation.

The problem with a free flowing dollar is that it begins to dilute the currency of foreign country that it is being used in. A Black Market exchange was clearly taking place. The need for a scrip currency was certain. The problem was most critical in Europe than in the Pacific or Mediterranean Commands, but in order to be successful all overseas military personal would need to be a part of MPC system.

Joint hearings before the Senate committees on appropriations, armed services, and banking and currency, during the first session of the 80th Congress put Military Payment Certificates into the development stage. Previous attempts at currency control had all failed to prevent the excess accumulation of foreign currencies.

The complete set of 90 notes started in 1946 and remained in continuous use through 1973. The most effective point was that a set or series of notes that included fractional and whole denominations would be put into use for a limited period of time and then be recalled and exchanged for a new series of notes. The trick was that these conversion days were top secret and only revealed the day that the exchange would take place. The previous series would be deemed as worthless after C-Day. If you failed to exchange your notes then you lost their worth.



CONVERSION DAY



This was not a very pleasant experience for profiteers or black marketers since they could stand to loose large sums of money. On conversion day the military bases were sealed off until the next day when the next series would take effect. Although the problem was not completely eliminated, it did put the deficit at a more manageable level.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing was responsible for producing the notes, but with so little time to design, produce, and deliver by September of 1946, the actual printing was done by private contractors Tudor Press and Forbes Lithographic Corporations. These companies shared the printing duties through the first seven series of notes until 1961.

Military Payment Certificates were printed by lithography which was a less expensive route than the intaglio method of U.S. currency. Counterfeiting was not a major concern since other methods were put into play as a prevention. The short lifetime of a particular series was in itself an anticounterfeiting device. The careful selection and combination of colors and the fact that one color was printed over another to give the notes their composite finished appearance was a counterfeiter's nightmare. Small discs of colored paper were imbedded in the paper stock on which the notes were printed. This was called planchette paper. Ultraviolet ink was used and although this is a popular method on foreign currencies today it was a new inovation in 1946.

The numbering used on MPC's is slightly different than that used on todays currency. The largest number is the serial number. It consists of eight digets along with a prefix and suffix letter. The series number is denot ed as such and is three digits. The first being the 461 series of 1946 and continuing for a total of thirteen different series of notes that ended with the 692 series of 1970. This means that at thirteen different occasions a conversion day was enacted through the history of the notes.

#### PLATE POSITION NUMBERS

Small Size, 5, 10, 25 & 50¢:

1	5	9	13	17	21	25
2	6	10	14	18	22	26
3	7	11	15	19	23	27
4	8	12	16	20	24	28
29	33	37	41	45	49	53
30	34	38	42	46	50	54
31	35	39	43	47	51	55
32	36	40	44	48	52	56
57	61	65	69	73	77	81
58	62	66	70	74	78	82
59	63	67	71	75	79	83
60	64	68	72	76	80	84

Medium Size, \$1:

1	6	11	16	21	26	31
2	7	12	17	22	27	32
3	8	13	18	23	28	33
4	9	14	19	24	29	34
5	10	15	20	25	30	35
36	41	46	51	56	61	66
37	42	47	52	57	62	67
38	43	48	53	58	63	68
39	44	49	54	59	64	69
40	45	50	55	60	65	70

Large Size, \$5 & \$10:

1	6	11	16	21
2	7	12	17	22
3	8	13	18	23
4	9	14	19	24
5	10	15	20	25
26	31	36	41	46
27	32	37	42	47
28	33	38	43	48
29	34	39	44	49
30	35	40	45	50

Looking at the chart, we find the largest possible number for the small size MPC would be 84; 70 for the \$1.00 size and 50 for the largest size, \$5.00 and \$10.00 MPC. The collector can also remember that position number 1 is always at the upper left corner of the 32" x 54" sheet at the time of printing regardless of the size of his MPC.





The other single or double digit number is a position number and not a plate number as one would be inclined to believe. This number indicates the location of a particular note on the printing plate. There is no plate number on a finished certificate. Position number 1 would indicate that this note would have the top left corner location on a plate. If you were to have a group of consecutive serial numbers then the position number would be the same.

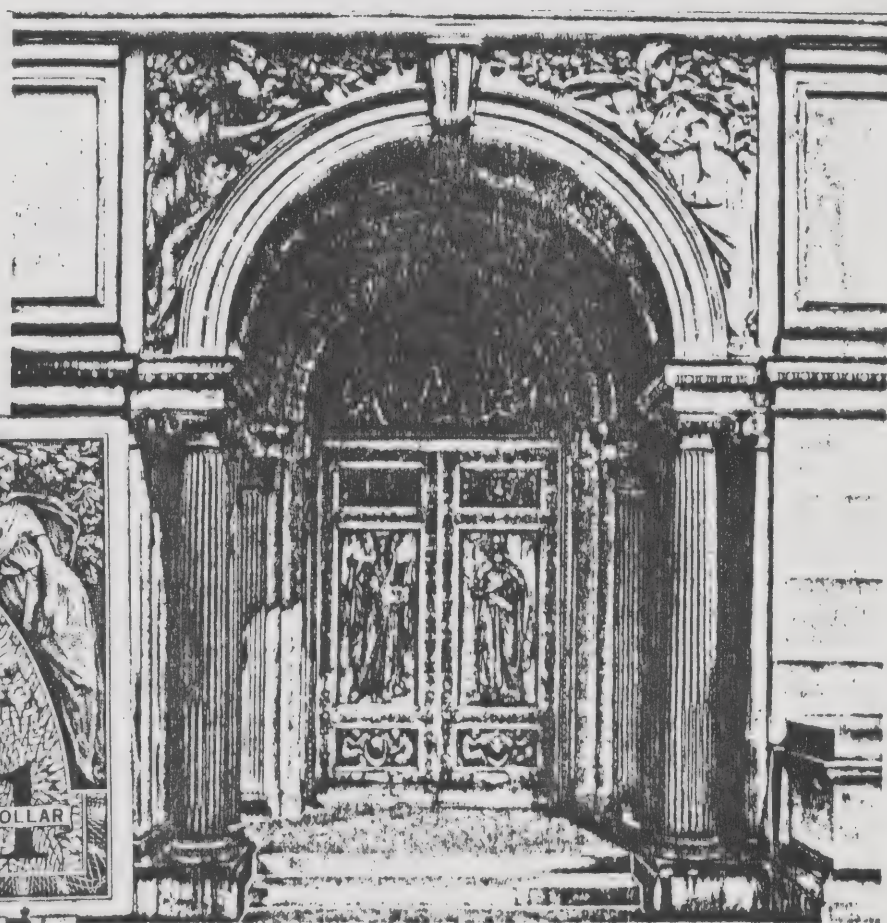
Designs started out quite plain for the first three series (461, 471, & 472) In the beginning not much concern was given toward creating an elaborate design. Time was short and deadlines had to be met. As the different series continued, quite a bit more creativity was used. Some of the designs borrowed features from other currencies, stamps, photographs, statues, or buildings. For instance the \$1 481 series note features part of the facade of the National Archive. The 641 and 651 series borrowed a vignette from the \$2 educational series onote of 1896. The back of the \$1 661 series uses the mirror image of Mount Rainier taken from the 1934 3¢ postage stamp. These are just a few of many examples of borrowing of design elements.



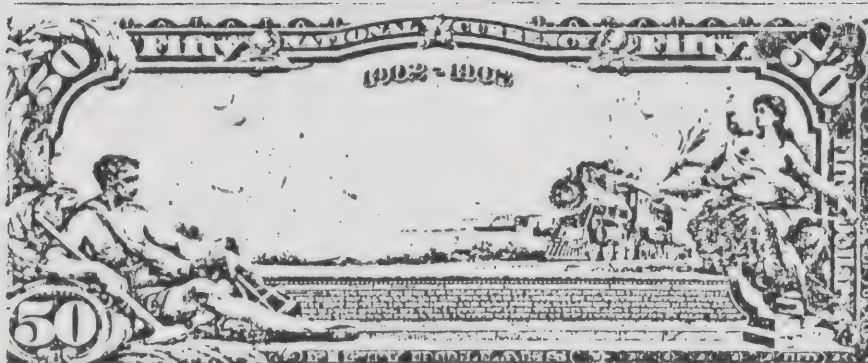




Statue of Guardianship, sculptured by James Earle Fraser, is located at the National Archives Building. (Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Service.)







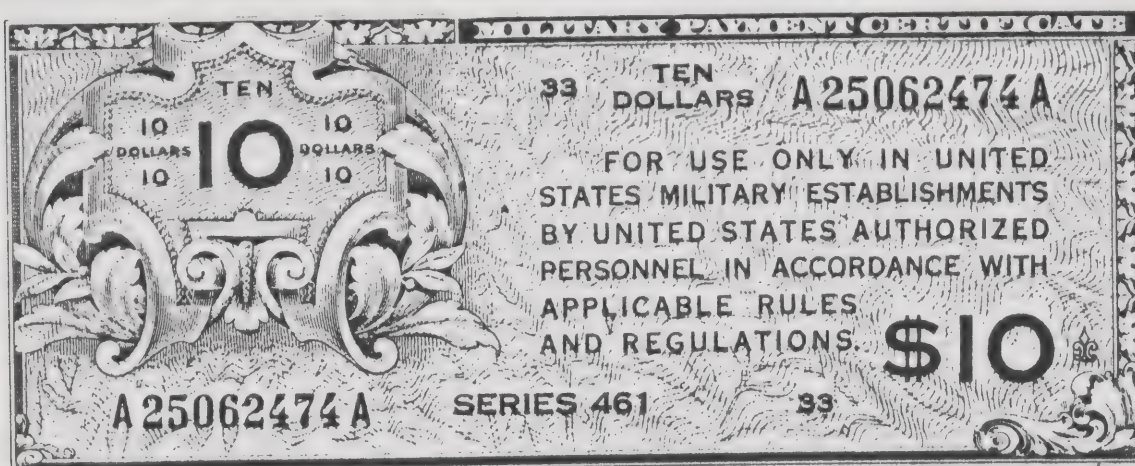
Most notes can be acquired in nearly all grades including uncirculated. Although many notes were produced, one must keep in mind that they were also systematically destroyed. The larger denominations are the most scarce. A soldier would make sure that he redeemed his larger bills and would more likely miss or purposely save some of the fractional denominations. There are about seven notes that are extremely difficult to obtain and the prices bear this out. In unc the \$5 471 series is king with a price of \$7,500. Second is the 541 \$5 costing around \$4,500. The 591 \$5 sits at about \$4,000 with the 471 \$10, 521 \$5 & \$10 at \$3,000 each along with the 541 \$10 note.

MPC's, as in most numismatic series, also contains its share of notes that are exceptions to the rule. For instance there are the 691 and 701 series of notes that were produced and were never issued. As far as the collecting community is concerned none of these notes are in a private collection. Sounds like the 64 Peace Dollar story! The 651 series has the mystery of the fractional notes. For years it was believed that no fractionals were issued until a set was sold in 1985 and another set at the 87 ANA auction by Bowers and Merena. Maybe more sets are out there waiting in the wings.



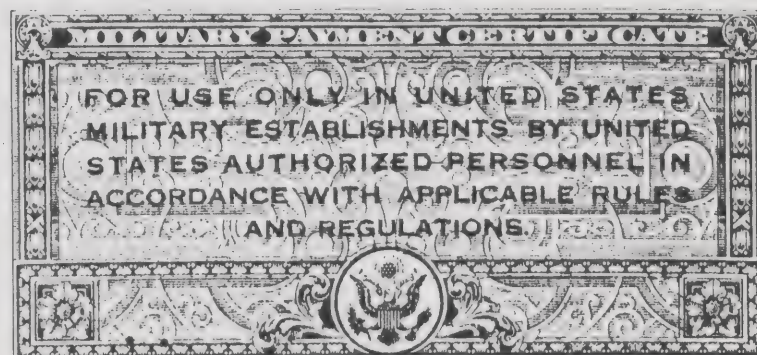
## SERIES 461

Note was issued September 16, 1946 in the European Theatre and September 30, 1946 in the Pacific Theatre. It was withdrawn on March 10, 1947. The printer was Tudor Press of Boston Massachusetts. They were numbered & seperated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morrocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, Scotland, and Trieste.



## SERIES 471

Note was issued March 10, 1947. It was withdrawn on March 22, 1948. The printer was Tudor Press of Boston Massachusetts. The were numbered & seperated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morrocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, Scotland, Trieste and Yugoslavia.





## SERIES 472

Notes were issued March 22, 1948 and were withdrawn on June 20, 1951. The printer was Tudor Press of Boston Massachusetts. They were numbered & separated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, Scotland, Trieste, and Yugoslavia.



## SERIES 481

Note was issued June 20, 1951 and was withdrawn on May 25, 1954. The printer was Forbes Lithograph Corporation of Boston Massachusetts. They were numbered & separated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, Scotland, Trieste, and Yugoslavia.



## SERIES 521

Notes were issued May 25, 1954 and were withdrawn on May 27, 1958. The printer was Forbes Lithograph Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts. They were numbered & separated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Austria, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, Scotland, Trieste, and Yugoslavia.





## SERIES 541

Notes were issued May 27, 1958 and were withdrawn on May 26, 1961. The printer was Tudor Press Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts. They were numbered & separated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Cyprus, England, France, Germany, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Morocco, Philippines, Ryukyus, and Scotland.



## SERIES 591

Notes were issued May 26, 1961 and were withdrawn on January 6, 1964 in the Pacific and January 13, 1964 in Europe. The printer was Forbes Lithograph Corporation of Boston, Massachusetts. They were numbered & separated by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Cyprus, Iceland, Japan, Korea, and the Philippines.



## SERIES 611

Notes were issued January 6, 1964 and were withdrawn on April 27, 1969. The printer was The Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Cyprus, Japan, Korea, and Libya.





### SERIES 641

Notes were issued August 31, 1965 and were withdrawn on October 21, 1968. The printer was The Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use was only in Vietnam.



### SERIES 651

Notes were issued April 28, 1969 and were withdrawn on May 19, 1969 in Japan, June 11, 1969 in Libya, and November 19, 1973 in Korea. The printer was The Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Areas of use included Japan, Korea, and Libya.



### SERIES 661

Notes were issued on October 21, 1968 and were withdrawn on August 11, 1969. The printer was The Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Area of use was only in Vietnam.





# SERIES 681

Notes were issued on August 11, 1968 and were Withdrawn on October 7, 1970. The printer was The Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Area of use was only in Vietnam.



# SERIES 692

Notes were issued on October 7, 1970 and were Withdrawn on March 15, 1973. Fractional denominations were withdrawn on June 1, 1971. The printer was the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Area of use was only in Vietnam.





Additional scarcities are found in the replacement notes. Like star notes, these were produced to replace any spoiled notes during production. This kept the accountability of the notes in order. Replacements can be identified by the lack of a suffix letter at the end of the serial number. These notes bring substantially higher prices than their regular issue counterparts.



MPC collecting can lead into a variety of other related topics such as concentration camp money, allied currency, invasion money, propaganda notes, military tokens, etc. Exhibiting these notes always seems to rekindle nostalgia. Those small pieces of paper money taken for granted, now are memories of exotic and far off places, of horrible defeats and glorious victories, of youth and vitality. It is a thrill to watch as someone walks past an exhibit of MPC's, stops abruptly, does an about face, and says "Hey, look at this. I remember them." Happy Birthday America, we'll never forget! (July 4, 1990)



Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, Depression Scrip:  
A Recently Discovered Issue

by

Lawrence C. Korchnak

Member: WPNS

Life Member: ANA-1928, NI-74, PAN-25, PNS-4

Presented to the

The Western Pennsylvania Numismatic Society

September 4, 1990

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## Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, Depression Scrip

Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, is a small town in southern Lawrence County about 50 miles Northwest of the city of Pittsburgh. In May of 1933, the Ellwood City School District issued certificates of indebtedness that until recently were unknown to the collecting public.

The sequence of events that led to Ellwood City School District's issuance of scrip began as early as April 27, 1932, when the minutes of the meeting of the Board of School Directors reported approximately \$100,000 in unpaid taxes. Auditors were called in and were unable to balance the books noting that "carelessness was evident." On May 3, 1932 the auditors reported that "a large number of unopened letters were found." There were also a "number of checks payable to the school district discovered in an accumulation of papers." As a result of the auditors' findings, a special meeting was held on May 25, 1932 where a per capita tax and a 4 3/4 mill property tax were discussed to correct the financial mess. No action was recorded on either option.

The following month was crucial. In June the school district was faced with making a large payment to cover the 1925 Series bonds used to build Lincoln High School.





ELLWOOD CITY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
LINCOLN JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL  
ELLWOOD CITY, PENNSYLVANIA

The Board withdrew the mortgages of seven properties from the First National Bank of Ellwood City as a quick solution to their cash flow problem. Instead of acknowledging their dwindling tax reserves, the Board extended the deadline for the payment of delinquent taxes. They apparently shelved the issue in favor of more pressing concerns because they replaced the Superintendent and the Board Secretary in July. The Board withheld the Superintendent's paycheck and charged the former Board Secretary for a shortage of funds. Facing an erosion of



public confidence, the board addressed the delinquent tax issue with caution. In the words of one School Board member, they "did not want to force collection all taxes, and have some of our good citizens sent to jail." So, in August, instead of collecting taxes, the tax collector prepared exhortation lists.

Still sensing something wrong, the Board audited the tax collector. When discrepancies were reported in his records, they fired him and took legal action. Having put their house in order, the Board finally turned their attention to the tax problem. Unfortunately, it was now October, and six months had passed without action on delinquent taxes. A review of the records reveal that the Board resolutely filed liens against properties owing two years worth of taxes and declared that the teachers would "contribute" ten percent of their salaries. By November, they made an effort to generate income by adopting an installment plan for delinquent taxpayers.

With new impetus to collect taxes, a strange turn of events came about in December when, according to Pennsylvania school law, new school board members took office. The new Board reversed the old Board's policy and once again extended the payment deadline for back taxes! The politics are uncertain at this point, but a full two months passed with no significant action until February 9, 1933 when the Board prepared papers for a \$50,000 bond issue. By March, the situation deteriorated to such an



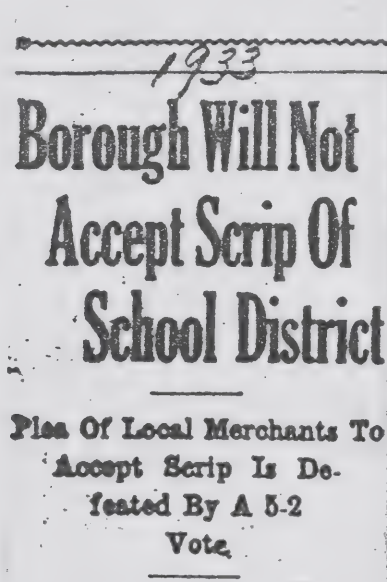
extent that at least one teacher's check bounced. Yet, surprisingly, the deadline for delinquent tax payments was again extended. Furthermore, the Citizen's National Bank in Ellwood City went into receivership and the school district had to initiate action to recover the bonds that were held through the bank. With no cash on hand and taxes not due now until June, a deficit of \$75,063.23 was forecast for the year. This estimate was low since it took into account revenues generated by the \$50,000 bond issue and a further reduction in teachers' salary of twenty percent.

In April, when the amount of delinquent taxes grew to \$143,320.76, the Board was devastated to find out that the bond issue did not sell. The 4% yield was too low to attract buyers. They immediately borrowed \$25,000 to operate the school until the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 1933). This \$25,000 formed the basis for issuing the certificates of indebtedness, or scrip. Printer's proofs were submitted to the Board on April 13, 1933 and the notes were printed.

Things were looking up for the school district in May when they re-funded the unsold bonds at a higher rate. The bonds sold and they issued the scrip but the scrip was refused by the Ellwood City Borough Council. The Ellwood City Ledger reported on June 3, 1933 that the local merchants appeared before City Council and urged the city's acceptance of the scrip for taxes and electric lights. The



solicitor for the borough argued that it was not legal tender and he pointed out that, according to law, such payments (i.e. taxes and utilities) must be made in legal tender, not scrip. In spite of the school board solicitor's attempt to affirm the district's authority to issue scrip, the Council rejected the scrip in a 5-2 vote.



The Ledger Reports

So, the merchants found themselves accepting scrip while the Borough collected cash. In the words of Mrs. Anna Brewer, whose name appears on the envelope containing the discovery notes, "Mr. Hancher (the Board Secretary) had quite a time with them (scrip). Teachers couldn't go out of town... they couldn't pay taxes."

In summary, a combination of events appear to have forced the Ellwood City School District into issuing



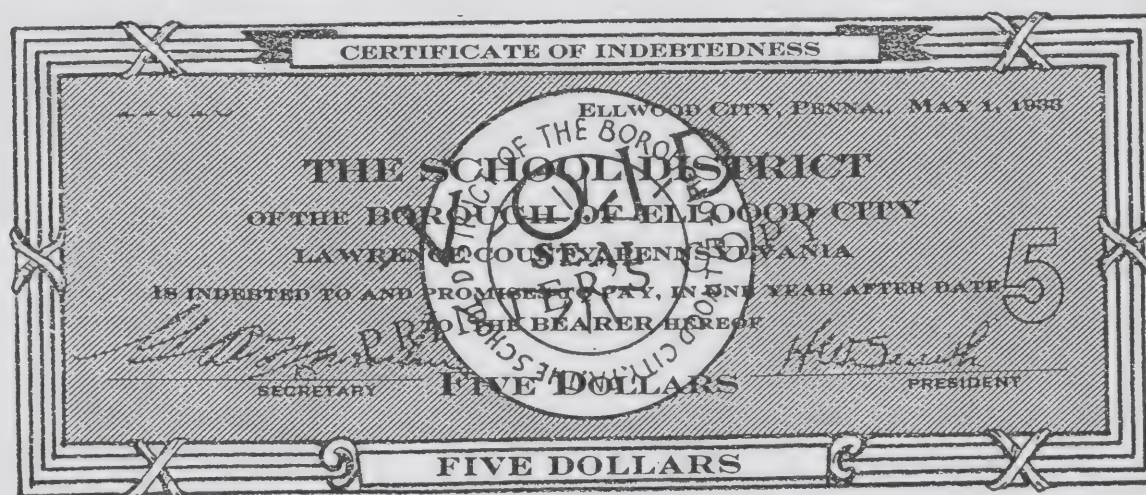
depression scrip. First, there was questionable behavior on the part of three key persons associated with the School district: a tax collector, a former school Superintendent, and a former School Board Secretary. Second, the school district lost money in a failed bank and miscalculated the percentage rate on a much needed bond issue. Third, and perhaps most significantly, the Board put off delinquent tax collection until it was too late.

The existence of the scrip came to light when the author purchased an envelope containing four printer's proofs: three five-dollar denominations and one ten-dollar denomination. Each note was overprinted on its face in red "/V/O/I/D/ PRINTER'S COPY" in two lines. The proof, or specimen notes, are printed on heavy white paper while records indicate that the actual issue was "bound in perforated books, and numbered consecutively by corresponding numbers on each certificate, and stub thereof." The five-dollar notes are printed in royal blue ink while the ten-dollar notes are orange. A one-dollar specimen note printed in light green was discovered later. Research reveals that only three denominations were issued: ones, fives, and tens. According to school district records the total issue was broken down in the following manner:

10,000 of the par value of	\$1.00 each totaling	\$10,000
2,000 of the par value of	\$5.00 each totaling	\$10,000
<u>500 of the par value of</u>	<u>\$10.00 each totaling</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
12,500 Notes issued	Total value	\$25,000



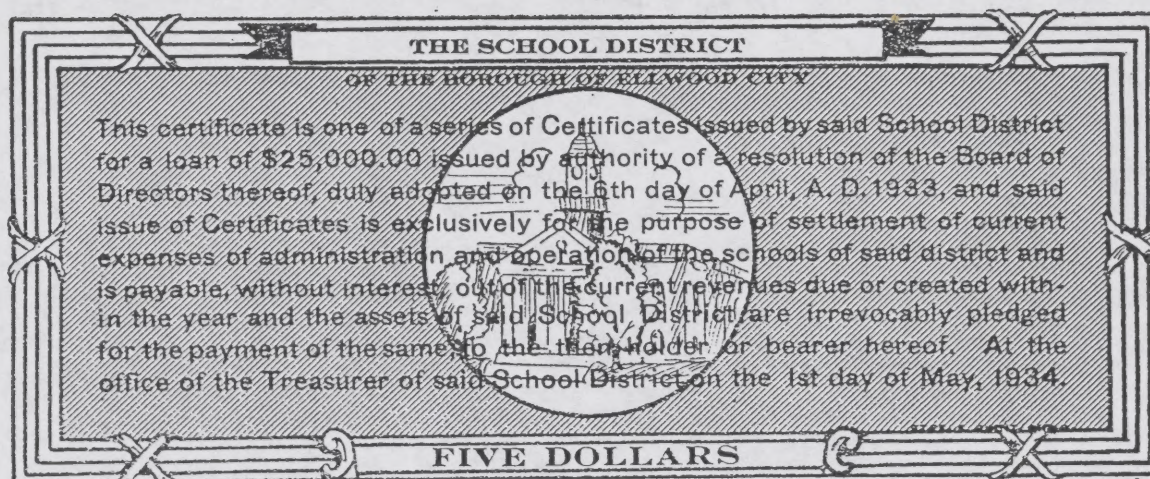
The face of each note displays the seal of the Ellwood City School District. The signature of H. W. Smith, school board President, is in the lower right hand corner and the signature of G. B. Hancher, school board Secretary, is in the lower left corner. Only one specimen note (purchased by the author from a former school employee who saved it from the incinerator) shows a partial serial number in the upper left corner. See below. The complete serial number, 11018, is visible only when the note is turned sideways.



Face: \$5 Note with Partial Serial Number

The back features a statement of indebtedness as well as a view of Lincoln High School, built in 1926, and still in use today. All specimen and regular issue notes were printed by the Steele Print Shop in Ellwood City. The Steele Print Shop is still in operation, unfortunately, the present owner reports that early company records concerning the scrip were discarded sometime in the mid 1950's.





Back: \$5 Note

The discovery envelope carried three names: Mr. James Marshall, Betty Rouse, and Mrs. Brewer.

*Betty Rouse  
Supt. Office  
Lincoln Bldg*

*Mr. James Marshall*

*QQQQ*

*final script certificate (all others destroyed  
by Mrs. Brewer)*

The Discovery Envelope



Mr. Marshall, deceased, was a prominent citizen whose son was an elementary school principal for some years in the Ellwood City School District. Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. Rouse are former school secretaries who presently reside in Ellwood City. When questions concerning the whereabouts of the notes were put to Mrs. Rouse, she said that when the archives were cleaned out (ca. 1944) she received permission from Superintendent J. Ellis Bell to give Mr. Marshall some of the notes. "Others were destroyed" in her words, but she believes that some may be in the hands of individuals who did not redeem them.

When asked, Mrs. Brewer corrected the notation on the envelope reporting that she did not, in fact, destroy the scrip. They were destroyed by G. Blaine Hancher, the school board Secretary. Mrs. Brewer described the redeemed scrip as being "packed in a box ... probably destroyed." She also recalls that some notes were not redeemed. This was verified in a school district audit entry dated June 30, 1937. It recorded a total of \$15 worth of unredeemed scrip. The denominations of the notes that remain outstanding cannot be verified since the ledger containing that information is unavailable. Mrs. Brewer seems to recall that only one-dollar notes remain unredeemed. She speculates that higher denominations would have represented too large a sum to sacrifice for a souvenir during the Great Depression.



Since the discovery of the first four notes, a set of specimen notes have surfaced along with a single five-dollar note. It appears that all that remains of the printer's proofs submitted in April of 1933 are two ten-dollar specimen notes, five five-dollar specimen notes and one one-dollar note. Repeated efforts to confirm the existence of any of the unredeemed notes have failed.



## Ellwood City Depression Scrip Specimen Notes

